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DIAGNOSIS — AND A 'MOMENT IN HISTORY'

This memorandum written the 27th of September, 1989, recalls the day 47 years ago, when G. de Purucker, Leader and Teacher of the Theosophical Society Point Loma, left us. But more than that it serves to bring to focus his first great act of leadership, a clarion call to all Theosophists of all persuasions to work for theosophical unity. That was in February 1930. Not fully today these many years later is the daring of that call appreciated. Divisions among the several Theosophical Societies had existed for decades and were rigid, suspicion was rife, and in some areas actual antagonism flared. And then G. de P. spoke: "Unity, union, combined efforts, and the sense of Theosophical solidarity". The flag of Brotherhood was flying. It was to be a new Theosophical Era!

It was a complete *volte face* from attitudes of the past, whatever reasons may have been deemed necessary for them then—and assuredly some may have been! Shockwaves ran through the Movement. Response was immediate and heartwarming, especially from Adyar; but with passing months 'difficulties' arose, and the grand impulse, starting so daringly, weakened, and with passing years only its echo, until recently, was heard. History has recorded the events, and the theosophical historian will find in theosophical magazines and archives much that is needed for faithful reporting.

Responses to our Open Letter to Leaders of the Theosophical Movement of earlier this year are in, and Responses to Responses received. These speak for themselves, and, singularly need no comment. 1989 ends and the last decade of the 20th century begins. But questions still hammer for answer. Is it mere avoidance of toe-stepping that quiets and stills the questing heart and mind; the plaintive plea for congeniality alone that gives satisfying answer? Is it a comfortable *status quo* that reflects the dharma we should be following? Administrations are administrations and have a right to their own 'arrangements', which should be respected. But what is the larger goal, what in simple

words is Theosophy? Understanding more and more fully and exactly and deeply and universally just what that is constitutes the real bond of a positive unity to be sought for.

Diagnosis is needed. As the impersonal physician regards the patient, so must we take note and study the Theosophical Movement and prescribe what is needed today. We are not speaking of the various administrative branches or societies within the Movement—members should be members where they feel at home—but of Theosophy itself, what its Teachings are. We should be willing to ask ourselves: to what degree should groups called the Alice Bailey group, the Liberal Catholic Church, other numerous so-called 'New Age' groups—to what degree are they part of the larger Movement? Can the overall Society remain a healthy and fit instrument with such attachments? Are there today "two Theosophys"? And again, what today is the Esoteric Section? Should it interfere overtly or obliquely in the administration of any T.S.?

To many it seems clear that the L.C.C. is a separate institution which should have no connection with administrative running of Theosophical Societies. Their individual members should be respected if they prefer its beliefs and rituals and ceremonies, but they should not be considered also members of the T.S. and should have no say in its functioning.

And "two Theosophys"? The idea is ludicrous. There is but one Theosophy., based on, and loyal to, the Teachings of the Masters of Wisdom and Peace, those same Teachers who trained and instructed HPB to found the T.S. and carry through their program.

And the E.S.? Strange paradox! What should most strongly unite is today most divisive—the E.S. But what is the E.S.? When begun by H.P.B., and also by W.Q.J. writing the first draft of its Rules submitted by him to her, there was then the Teacher, its director. That was plainly stated. When the trained Teacher 'leaves' in the full esoteric meaning of that thought, and is followed by another, that other, too, in the full esoteric sense, must be a Teacher. And the Teaching will be in strict accord with the teachings of the School. It can be tested; and proof, one way or another, comes from the testing. If there is no trained Teacher, then the School

closes—outwardly, circumstances being such that this is clearly seen. Inwardly, the esoteric spirit, the esoteric study and discipline, can be continued by the individual of any TS, and in truth by fit individuals not of any TS. If there should come in future years an outwardly recognized Teacher, those who are ready will recognize this. But in the meantime paramount ever is the Teacher within each one of us. To listen to that inner voice is not divisive, but in truth the strongest bond linking all groups and all individuals in the Theosophical Movement. The way then will open, and the next step will be clear.

In a century perhaps unprecedented in its horrors of war, crime, drugs, lowering of moral standards, weakening of educational attitudes, an ominous feeling hovers over all as of “the decline and fall of the Roman Empire”. That there have also been compensating scientific research, social endeavors, and ever the performance of outstanding individuals, offers a needed breath of hope, but does not blind one to the dark that presses down. The T.S.—the whole Theosophical Movement—has a duty to perform. In H.P.B.’s words, we have been called upon to live “true to its mission, to its original impulse.” Where then do we stand?

Today, approaching 1990, there are more divisions in the Theosophical Movement than fifty years ago. Why? And tomorrow more, and then more, the diffusion and weakening process rolling on? Are we doomed to follow slavishly the astral pattern of 2000 years ago? Empire is not what makes the Theosophist or the Theosophical Society or helps the world, but united basic impersonal thought lifted to the Buddhist plane, that is what is called for. These touch not on administrative programs or prerogatives falling individually or collectively within the province of the various Societies; but they bear on deeper issues. What that higher recognition calls for is impersonality, a rising above closed boundaries, to embrace the wider view, that of the total Theosophical Movement. Does not earnest diagnosis call for this?

Scanning the ‘pages’ of theosophical history of the last half century we come to our final conclusion: All branches of the Theosophical Movement need each other. Why? Because they are like the branches of a single Tree. Their thought, their actions, their aspirations, their mistakes, their failures, unitedly affect the world. We are all servitors not of ourselves but of humanity, of the humanity of this sad Globe D in its most difficult long period of Kaliyuga. But above all

and far more important even than need of each other is *need for all Branches of the Theosophical Movement of their Root, their Source*. United strongly to that, they have health, vision, and endurance. Without that Root-unity inevitably comes weakness, lethargy, decay.

Why hold back then from really—in deep honesty beyond mere words—*really* working together, facing as co-workers the problems before us, seeking in quiet exchange of thought and in friendly conversation answers to those deeper questions? The time has come when we should speak out fearlessly, theosophically, with an eye to the welfare of humanity. Today offers us opportunity for another historic moment in the history of the Theosophical Movement when these larger issues can be addressed. Poignant are the memories of past years and ‘what might have been’. But we look to the present—and to the future, and to our duty.

Yet still, as we close this Memorandum, our thought goes back a half-century to the date of February 1930. Ah, that truly was a great moment in history!

—W.E.S.

THE LIGHTED SHADOW, PERSONALITY, SELFHOOD, AND REBIRTH

William Laudahn

‘Myself,’ perhaps ‘yourself.’ At face value, these terms are convincing. The common belief is that personalities, however different, are the selfhood of each human being. The daily and hourly clash of such personal ‘selves’ appears to be the stuff of life. A very few suffer from ‘multiple personalities’, raising the question of which is the dominant self.

Are there, at least, two selves? In metaphysics, yes: the Higher and the Lower. In Theosophy, the only true Self—fused with Divinity—is the Higher. Personality and its characteristics are so transitory and superficial that they are assigned as properties of the lower self.

In shallow religious views, the lower self (as ‘Soul’) is thought to be changeless and immortal. The hope is that the permanent person, ideally with the Personal God, will be gratified forever. A heaven with endless opportunities for sensual pleasure is projected. Seldom noted in this context are spiritual and intellectual pleasures. If this is a nice example of wishful thinking, is it really so nice?

"To me that...is horrible," said a great philosophical thinker, G. de Purucker. "To remain permanently as I am in my Ego and never be able to change and go higher," would be a bleak destiny." (*Studies in Occult Philosophy*, 500) Further, he observed that the idea of immortality as permanent personalities has ushered in world and personal misery, selfishness, suffering, and pain. The light of the true Self banishes these shadows. Alone, it is immortal. The lower self with its personality is a classic example of mortality. Often, it is so empty that it perishes even before the body. In any event, both the body and personality are subject to change within their natural limits.

The human scene teems with all types of 'personas', masks of personality. Some are pleasant, others border on disaster. Most are bland. Some great and brilliant people are sadly deficient in personal relationships. On the other hand, certain amiable souls have no other qualifications. It is nice, but rare, to find 'well rounded' individuals.

Consider the enigmatic and volatile personality of Madame Blavatsky. It is not true that she never enjoyed placid moments. Her associates truly appreciated such moments! Those sunny periods contrasted so vividly with the other more stormy but 'normal' times. Outstanding about the Blavatsky personality is that it was "most remarkable...exceedingly strong and self-willed, and withal endowed with extraordinary psychic faculties...". (Kingsland: *The Real H.P. Blavatsky*, 59)

Such characteristics involved her in a titanic struggle with the lower self. Due to her great soul, iron will, and philosophic genius, she achieved victory for the Higher self. This triumph was especially evident in her "life-work and mission" as revealed from a loftier plane. Then it was urged that the psychical be cast aside in favor of the metaphysical and philosophic. Madame Blavatsky was metamorphosed into "H.P.B."

Usually, however, Madame Blavatsky allowed the personality free reign. Like the rest of us, she was human—only more so! Therefore, she did not appear before the world as an ideal 'saintly figure' or typical 'religious leader', so called. Unlike some of these, she was not a hypocrite. In her case, the burden is put on the observer to be able to see what is behind the facade. That is not easy, which explains the many unfavorable reviews of Madame Blavatsky. The mystical and metaphysical H.P.B. is overlooked. The lower self looms larger, in the common view, than the Higher Self. Indeed, the latter is invisible. the lower self dies,

except in the memory of small selves-and their biographies.

What about reincarnation and the Self? There are many ideas about this subject. The Master K.H. said that "you were possessed of the Oriental view of reincarnation...on July 5th at Bombay" (in 1881). (*Mahatma Letters*, 329) Discussing Reincarnation, William Q. Judge, in 1890, wrote that "many Theosophists accept doctrines of that name, but are not able to say what it is they have accepted. They do not pause to find out what reincarnates... Some, at first think that when they die they will reincarnate, without reflecting that it is the lower personal I they mean, which cannot be born again in a body." (*Echoes of the Orient*: I,123)

Told that "the Bible says that man was made in the image of God," Mr. Judge replied that "man is made in the image of his God, who is his Higher Self." (II, 295) Later he said "call the voice of conscience the voice of the Higher Self." This rather than the "Soundless Sound," which he wryly observed is "very difficult to hear." (347) As to the development of inner selfhood, Mr. Judge cited the "continual war" between the lower and the Higher Self. It is here that most people, "ever compromising," give way to the lower demands, waiting for a more opportune time before giving "the Higher the reigns of government—but that day will never come under such a course." (II, 417)

The spiral points downward, there is no rest. "Think," urged G.de P., "of the horror of everything remaining for ever as it is!" Can we face the truth? Immortality is relative. It is held that the inner God or Higher Self is immortal. Venturing even further ahead, if you will, in endless Duration, "even the Atman changes and grows to something sublimer...Growth...evolution, bringing out in ever larger measure the stored-up fountain of life, of intelligence, of being, lying within us: THAT... is the future, not static immortality." (*Studies*, 501)

The path to inner peace follows the recognition that 'here within' is the Cosmic Life, Intelligence—deathless for it is always here, there and everywhere. 'Myself' and 'yourself' are THAT. Nameless, it cannot be described. Neither spirit nor non- spirit, it is both and more.

Generally, theosophical literature has it that the Higher Self "overshadows the series of personalities which appear and disappear like evanescent phantoms in the great cyclic process of the phenomenal world of time and space." (*The Real H.P. Blavatsky*, (62) In *Isis Unveiled*, Madame Blavatsky spoke of the "vital sig-

nificance of mortals being "overshadowed by their divine Self, with every chance given to them to become immortal hereafter, but no other security than their personal efforts to win the kingdom of heaven, the so chosen man has already become an immortal while yet on earth." (II,153)

It remained for G. de Purucker to rephrase and re-emphasize the relationship of Higher and Lower Self by explaining that:

"...with the single exception of... 'lost souls.' who are exceedingly rare, every human being, and indeed every entity, is over-enlightened, or to use the curious English expression 'over-shadowed,' by an inner god, of which inner god such human being or such other entity is the expression, one expression at least, on this Earth. This inner god is our link with the divine worlds, and the channel through which we receive these numerous and voiceless intimations of spiritual glory, of self-forgetfulness, and of impersonal love. This is what the Avatara Jesus had in mind when he is reported to have said: 'I and my father are one.' It is verily so. I will now go a little farther in explanation, and I hope that you will understand me.

This inner god is our Parent-Star. Now make of that statement what you can! It is not so much the physical star, although that is true also as being the corporeal vehicle of the inner god. Mere spacial distance has nothing to do with this fact, because the links are links of consciousness and of spirit. (*The Dialogues of G. de Purucker*, Vol II, 356)

The Higher Mind, the Higher Self. These are potent concepts in the universal mystical world outlook. They express inner truths that scientific or physical experiment cannot touch. At least, not yet. The inner god can only be approached by way of this Mind, this Self—for they are of the same stuff.

Light of this hue was again seen by de Purucker when he related that:

"radiant light which streams forth from that immortal center or core of our inmost being, which is our inner god, lightens the pathway of each one of us; and it is from this light that we obtain ideal conceptions,...we can then guide our feet towards an ever larger fulfilling in daily life of the beautiful conceptions which we as mere human beings dimly or clearly perceive, as the case may be.

"The divine fire which moves through universal Nature is the source of the individualized divine fire coming from man's inner god. ...Hence, call it by what name you please [the Christ Immanent, the living Buddha, Brahma, etc...], the reflective and mystical mind intuitively realizes that there works through him a divine flame, a divine life, a divine light, and that this by whatever name...is himself, his essential SELF. (*Occult Glossary*, G. de Purucker, 67)

In the inner, real and super-nature there is a close relationship, even IDENTITY of each and all. In the case of conscious beings (with lower selves), the Higher is in the area of divine unity. In the realm of Maya (Illusion), we find process, separation, distinction, differences. The Cycle of Necessity operates, making for expression, emanation, creation, and evolution—even good and evil. We may try to make the

good better, the evil less. In the meantime, appreciate the grand display.

As it is neither deserving nor so constituted, there is no private 'personal salvation' for the lower self. Immortality is only through the Higher Self, which 'over-enlightens' all. Let us be enlightened without seeming to be. For "there is wickedness in high places." And "pride goeth before a fall." Act in the spirit and—in the light—of the Golden Mean. All else will then be added, born and reborn, if it is to be.

THE THEOSOPHIST: AN ARTIST OF LIFE

P.L. Grim (Pen-name of Jan H. Venema)

There is such a thing as living Theosophy in an ACTIVE and in a PASSIVE way. Both are necessary, with the reservation that the word 'passive' does not express something negative! I for one prefer under all circumstances living the theosophical philosophy of life in an ACTIVE way. It makes us 'artists of life', the keynote of which is divine, cosmic rhythm.

There is such a thing as enjoying the blessings of art in an ACTIVE and in a PASSIVE way. The true musician now and then hears a heavenly music; it comes whispering like a rustling wind of the spirit from the inner spiritual spheres, and it makes him still, passive for a while. But soon there comes the irresistible urge: he seizes his violin or any other instrument, and he MUST interpret. No power in the world can discourage or stay him. He feels the cosmic rhythm, the cosmic urge or propelling power.

And the true poet is often silent, listening to songs on an inert plane when he beholds the ever-changing movements of life, jubilant or wailing fragments of word-music. For days it may form the background of his life, but suddenly the songs find expression in audible words. The interpretation HAD TO come.

The true painter sees in his mind's eye the most beautiful scenes, just as the sculptor in his imagination is grouping the figures in symmetrical order, and they often wonder if they will ever succeed in bringing to manifestation on the outward plane those touching blendings and gradations of the colors or refined features with brush or chisel. But the day comes when they TRY. They MUST try even if it should cost them their innermost heartblood. They are children of this universe, and they are urged by the irresistible, cosmic,

propelling force, the power of creation, or rather re-creation. And grateful is the world!

Thus it is with the true Theosophist, the artist of life. Living it passively? Yes—now and then to be sure, but with a dangerous side! For like some artists we can delight TOO long in the profundities of the wonderful teachings, the flights of human thinking, the heights of spiritual visions. Whole passages from *THE SECRET DOCTRINE* or from *STUDIES IN OCCULT PHILOSOPHY* remain lingering in the mind. In itself all very fine. But the danger lies in the 'delighting', sometimes inclining towards a sort of self-satisfaction — perhaps also mixed with a few tiny seeds of that treacherous flower of illusion bearing the name of 'better- than-thou'? Perhaps leading to a good-natured little criticism of a brother, who does not as yet perfectly interpret the music of life in word and attitude in accordance with the rules of the art...?

Ah yes, there are many kinds of artists, many kinds also of artists of LIFE! But I for one continue to prefer the active kind, those who like H.P.B. and other leaders HAD TO interpret, even if it cost them their innermost heartblood. The true theosophist, he who is not satisfied to have his name only on the membership register, plays (tactfully!) on all the instruments which he or she has karmically developed. These instruments will become more and more perfect by use as those of the artist. Just like the musician he can listen to the heavenly music of the cosmic spheres; like the poet he is moved by the jubilant and wailing songs of life; like the painter and the sculptor he has inspiring spiritual visions and pictures. They can make him very still. But THEN comes the test of his worth and veracity. The cosmic forces of love, compassion, and the consequent urge to re- create flow irresistibly through him, the whole universe plays in and through him. He may bewail his as yet imperfect instrument, but by Heaven there are those who know nothing at all as yet of these forces, nothing at all of this art of life, and so he must, he MUST... And he will ever try to create and re-create...

And the world is waiting!

only a few paragraphs, but the whole will be of interest to those who can read French. —Ed.

A society's disintegration is apparent when it rejects the authority of sacred writings; when the scholastic level is abased in order to accommodate the egalitarian demands of the masses who look upon knowledge only as a means to an end, with the result that anyone may interpret anything anyhow.

We, therefore, must discriminate between the false prophets cum sorcerers' apprentices generated by our present Kali-Yuga and those authentic Great Beings animated by the Light of the Hierarchy. We must also be aware of the profound significance of the astrological cycle humanity is currently traversing. Both the earthly globe and humanity are like a sick organism which, through a process of purification, is bringing out to the body's surface all the accumulated impurities in order to prepare it for the next more enlightening and purer phase of existence.

Political scandals are not more numerous nowadays than at previous ends of cyclic periods; but, because of certain cyclical influences (which Astrologers will recognize as Pluto in Scorpio) these days nothing can be hidden and everything sees the light of day; and this fact creates a false impression of more corruption when in reality there is only a greater unmasking that cleanses all strata of humanity. The emergence from Kali-Yuga and the transition of the old into the new world will occur without catastrophies only if humanity rejects the nefarious end of cycle challenge; if it refuses to take charge of itself and to integrate its shadows and darknesses; and if it perseveres in the path of materialism and egocentricity: it is mankind alone that will decide the course it will take. The Masters and Initiates will intervene only up to a certain point, and will leave the responsibility of choice to humanity...

—(Translation by Alfred Sonabend)

THE WINTER SOLSTICE — A UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

Robert Bonnell

In the midst of the emotional turmoil known socially as the Christmas Season, there prevails an additional activity which serves a most significant and universally important role. This activity, known from

A GLIMPSE OF THE PRESENT AND A PERSPECTIVE OF THE FUTURE

Ives Platt

The above is the title of the lead article in *Le Lotus Bleu*, August—September 1989, official organ of the Theosophical Society in France. Space permits here

antiquity as the Winter Solstice (approximately December 21st), has an astronomical, seasonal, and esoteric aspect. The astronomical phase heralds the sun's most southern position in relation to our hemisphere. Seasonally, it initiates Winter into the natural world which is not merely a bleak period of abandonment, as it may seem, but rather a period of intense re-creating or re-seeding phenomena, by whose impetus the pageant of the later seasons unfolds.

The esoteric aspect is indicated by the presence of these life-compelling energies, for they reveal the intimate association, at this time, of the spiritual and physical worlds. This worldly intimacy affords the human soul, with its powers of mentality, immeasurable value towards the fulfillment of its destiny, providing it is free from the nonsensical indulgences of holiday dissipation. We must remember that such a period produced what is spoken of as The Christ, due to its potent embrace of Divine Causality (the Father), and Human Effectuality (the Son). As in Christ, so in nature, and so in man, for the three are but varying intensities of the universal expression.

While the energies of the Solstice time, or Christmas period as it is called today, are seen in Nature as vegetative revisions, in the human sphere they seek to initiate spiritual development as the essential human endeavor. Of course, the opportunity for spiritual inquiry and participation is always present, but at this time of the year its necessity is most perceptible. It might even be said that the customary 'Christmas Spirit' is a vague yet intuitive response to the presence of these spiritual forces, for they are the means by which we consciously unite with this yearly intensity of divine light, which perpetually strives to encourage spiritual achievement as the true reality.

—Dr. Bonnell is President of the Long Beach T.S. Lodge (Adyar)

HENRY GEIGER: "A Potent Force for Good"

Utne Reader, May/June 1989, pays tribute to Henry Geiger in words by Richard Grossman, director of The Health in Medicine Project at Montefiore Medical Center, and a long-time subscriber to *Manas* and a friend of Henry Geiger:

"*Manas*, a weekly journal of independent inquiry, ceased publication of Dec. 28, 1988, not quite 41 years after its first issue. Henry Geiger, the man who conceived the publication, and wrote almost every word of each eight-page issue, died February 15, 1989, at the age of 80.

"Such was Geiger's passion for anonymity that his name appeared in his weekly only once or twice a year, and then only in the statement of ownership and

management required by law. That same statement always reported the small circulation of *Manas*, somewhere between 2,000 and 3,000 subscribers. But, as Robert Hutchins once put it, 'They're the 2,500 most interesting people in the world.'

"Above all, *Manas* was Henry Geiger, a man without elaborate formal education, who had been variously a chorus boy on Broadway, a journalist, a conscientious objector in World War II, a commercial printer, and a lecturer and leader in The Theosophy Lodge in Los Angeles. Geiger's editorial technique was to quote from and reflect on his pantheon of heroes and heroines: Plato, Gautama Buddha, Lao Tse, Gandhi, Tom Paine, Emerson, Pico della Mirandola, Simone Weil, Jose Ortega y Gasset, Abraham Maslow, Hannah Arendt, Thoreau, and a host of others. He considered these men and women to be eternally present through their work, available for stimulation, inspiration, and dialogue, and above all, for the building of one's own philosophical stance..."

And *The Christian Science Monitor*, May 17, 1989, carried this Media Commentary: "Just Words, but They Linger", written by Jonathan Rowe, Staff Writer. We select a few lines, as we like particularly the opening paragraph:

"The newsstand was a grimy little nook, with out-of-town papers and magazines you'd certainly never think of buying. But on a wire rack was a publication that stood out for its utter plainness. No cover. No pictures. It was called *Manas*.

"I am drawn to things that don't try to please me. And at 30 cents, why not? That day, near the end of my schooling, was the start of an education. More than 15 years later, my bookshelves are full of writers I first encountered—or first began to grasp—through this little weekly journal. *Manas* was an island of calm amid the visual clutter of today's media. ...Those publications that clamor so loudly for attention fade from memory like last night's tuna fish. Yet *Manas*, so utterly nondescript, lingers.... The tone was sober but hopeful—Prospero and King Lear. The outlook was both left and right—left in diagnosis, right in response. *Manas* saw acquisitiveness and self-seeking as the roots of social problems. But it held that answers should be voluntary and local rather than centralized and coercive."

And in "Henry Geiger: In Memoriam", we read:

"The life work of Henry Geiger, who died after a long illness on February 15, 1989, was a vivid manifestation of the energy and power residing in theosophy. As the guiding hand behind *Manas*, a remarkable journal that for forty-one years explored rationally, aesthetically, and spiritually the great achievements of the human mind, he ensured the publication, week after week, of a periodical of the highest intellectual and literary standards. His own contributions, although always unsigned, were nevertheless most often attributable to him because of his characteristic and inspiring way with words. ...Always seeking what is most humanly valuable in every age, and cherishing in particular the ancients, he was forever returning to Socrates and Plato to relate their search for eternal truths to the moral crises of our times. This theosophist was a potent force for good in the world, and he made an outstanding contribution to the spiritual evolution of humanity. All honor to his memory."

—Catherine Roberts, PhD., Berkeley, Ca.

ON DR. de PURUCKER'S MANDATE

Perhaps of interest at this particular time is the following, an extract from the *O.E. Library Critic* (Washington, D.C.) November 1930, by its editor H.N. Stokes, a member then of the Theosophical Society (Adyar) who never hesitated to speak his mind in defense of truth and the interests of true Theosophy. -Ed.

The utmost that de Purucker has claimed is that he has received a direct mandate from certain Mahatmas to work for brotherhood. We know that the Mahatmas of old insisted upon brotherhood as one of the essentials of a theosophical movement. Have we any reason for thinking that they do not do so today? Can we imagine that they look with indifference upon the present warring theosophical sects, upon those who cast glances of scorn at fellow theosophists? Have we any right to say that they may not endorse that theosophical society which, of all theosophical societies, has been the only one to open the way to fraternization? Can we deny them the right or the power to give to its leader a direct mandate to work for theosophical brotherhood and to give it in any way that they judge best?

Certainly I am not making the claim that it is so, but there can be no question that such a thing is possible, and if we can believe what the Masters have written they must be nearer to those who make an attempt to bring about such mutual good-will than to those who look on all societies but their own as beneath their notice. I am convinced that Brother de Purucker is working in the direction the Masters would wish. Whether they have so directed him or not is a matter of quite secondary importance except as a question of veracity. As long as he does that it seems to me that making uncharitable charges is out of place. If one charges another with being a liar it is not sufficient to set up one's own theories against his. One is expected, and would be required if facing a court, to present concrete and proved examples of lying. If one charges another with being a charlatan it is not sufficient to come forward with garbled quotations from H.P.B. about apostolic succession, making her appear to say what she never did say. Everyone has a right to be presumed innocent until definitely proved guilty, and in the present instance I have seen nothing but denunciations without the least attempt at proof. That, my good friends of the opposition, is where I stand and propose to stand, cost what it may.

BOOK REVIEWS

Krotona of Old Hollywood, Vol.I, 1866—1913, by Joseph E. Ross, El Montecito Oaks Press, Inc., Montecito, Ca., Illustrated, hardcover, 300 pages, \$22.95

This is one of the most fascinating books written

on the history of the Adyar Theosophical Society. For the first time we have an inside story of the time, within the Theosophical Society, when Leadbeater predicted the 'Coming in' of Krishnamurti, and the occult phenomena of the early 20th century were being discussed.

Numerous histories of this period have been written by outsiders who have had literary access to the material. Here Mr. Ross has brought to light a great number of unknown letters by C.W. Leadbeater, Annie Besant, and A.P.Warrington, to give the insiders' perspective at a fascinating period, a time of theosophic change.

The book covers the period from beginnings of the Theosophical Society at the turn of the century, and up to 1913. It deals with such theosophical notables as Dr. Weller van Hook, Irving Cooper, Dr. H.N.Stokes of *The O.E. Library Critic*, and also includes letters giving the 'insiders' viewpoints for Steiners's removal of the German Section from the T.S. which ultimately became the Anthroposophical Society.

As one who has read virtually every book on this period and is familiar with most of the available source material, I consider this volume is essential reading for both those interested in the early history of the Theosophical Society and also for the theosophical historian. Joseph E. Ross has written a fascinating book.

—John Cooper

The New Testament Commentaries of H.P.Blavatsky. Compiled and Annotated by H.J.Spierenburg. San Diego: Point Loma Publications, Inc., 1987. xiv x 343 pp. soft cover. price \$8.00

In presenting modern Theosophy through H.P.Blavatsky, she time and again called on the scriptures of many religions, including those long dead, to illustrate the universality of the Ancient Wisdom. In *The Secret Doctrine*, for example, are many instances where on a single page might be found four or five or more references to different religions. She perfected this technique of using comparative scripture to support her teaching, and made particularly effective use of the sacred books of the Jews and Christians.

Students of Theosophy who are interested in the various western religions that were growing, flourishing or dying in the early centuries of the current era will attest to her originality. For the most part, her comments on the scriptures owe little or nothing to

theological or popular interpretations. This is not surprising, in that the latter lean heavily on the dead letter, while she was more concerned with the inner, esoteric meanings.

Scattered throughout her work are hundreds of valuable pointers to the wisdom hidden in the New Testament. And they certainly are scattered: as well as those found on the pages of her major works, all fourteen of the volumes in the *H.P. Blavatsky Collected Writings* (BCW) series each contain from a few to dozens of references. That they should be compiled must have seemed most desirable to generations of students. With the completion of the BCW publications this became more practical than heretofore, and now, with *The New Testament Commentaries of H.P. Blavatsky* the need has been satisfied.

This book, however, is not merely a compilation of references. Dr. Spierenburg proceeds by gathering them in logical sequence with each book of the New Testament, chapter by chapter, verse by verse. First, he quotes from a standard English translation, a group of verses on which H.P.B. commented briefly or at length, and follows immediately with her commentaries on those verses. In some instances, a verse is also given in the original Greek, together with a transliteration and a word by word translation. In other footnotes, the compiler provides definitions, references and other useful information.

Comprehensive indexes cover both Old and New Testament and Rabbinical texts; Blavatsky's Writings; and a detailed general index. ("Detailed" is somewhat of an understatement: the general index runs to over one hundred pages!) One can only greatly respect the compiler for his skills and industry.

In short, this is an extremely useful reference work. It is especially valuable to set alongside say, H.P.B.'s articles dealing specifically with an aspect of Christianity, such as "The Esoteric Character of the Gospels" (BCW Vol. VIII); also the "Commentaries on the Gospel of John" (BCW Vol. XI). In addition, Dr. Spierenburg's work could be the starting point for many a comparative study, for example, Christianity's debt to the ancient Mystery religions.

Apart from anything else, this publication should put to rest for all time the accusation that Blavatsky was anti-Christian. Indeed, page after page attests to the very opposite.

This must be rated among the most important Theosophical publications of recent years.

—Ted G. Davy, Reprinted from *The Canadian Theosophist*, Sept.—Oct. 1988.

Blavatsky and Her Teachers, by Jean Overton Fuller, East-West Publications, London and the Hague, in association with Theosophical Publishing House, London, 270 pages, hardcover, illus. L14.95

This is a difficult book to review. The intentions of the author are laudable. She wishes to show us the perfections of Mme. Blavatsky and the Teachers, and a number of her conclusions are more than interesting. Of great value is the original research she has done into the Blavatsky period, including Russian and other writings. However, I must confess that the arguments she uses, whether one agrees with her conclusions or not, are not always to my mind valid. All too often a conclusion is reached which is based on the notion that this is what Madame Blavatsky must have done because this is what the author imagines her as doing. It is quite possible that the author is correct in her conclusions, but not always in her argument of her analysis.

—John Cooper

Daughter of Fire: A Diary of Spiritual Training with a Sufi Master, by Irina Tweedie, Blue Dolphin Press, Inc., Grass Valley, Calif., paper 822 pages, \$19.95

This is the story of Irina Tweedie, a Theosophist who lived at Adyar, and of her encounter with a Sufi Master whom she believes was in the same tradition as the Mahatmas of Madame Blavatsky.

The book is the diary of her life on the Path, and is one of the most fascinating spiritual autobiographies that I have read. It shows that the Path of spiritual training is not as easy as the New Age proclaims! It is a book that is riveting reading and is highly recommended.

—John Cooper

ITEMS OF INTEREST

Lectures of L. Gordon Plummer in Germany and The Netherlands

Attesting to the fine success of the visit of Gordon Plummer this summer to Germany and Holland are the quotes in our "From Letters Received" section. He ar-

rived in Berlin on June 11, guest of Wilfried and Erika Goltz, who drove him to Bringhausen in time for the annual TS Conference there, followed by a week's Summerschool, directed by Mrs. Irmgard Scheitauer. At the Conference Mr. Plummer spoke on "Memories of Point Loma", and at the School presented slides supporting his talks "On the Nature of Things", culminating in a special meeting of the Summer Solstice.

Nürnberg, as guest of Mr. and Mrs. Georg Schwarm, was a brief visit, but marked by a fine study-group meeting. From there on to The Hague, guest of Miss Willy Schmit, and a study-group at her home; then to Blavatskyhouse, headquarters of the TS (Point Loma-Covina), and a warm welcome from Mr. and Mrs. Herman Vermeulen and many members there. Three talks were given to crowded audiences in the lecture-hall, again "On the Nature of Things", illustrated by slides, and also on "The Seven Jewels of Wisdom," Arien Smit acting as translator. Before returning home Mr. Plummer stayed at the hospitable home of Mr. and Mrs. Mistry in Mississauga (near Toronto, Canada), and gave some informal talks there. He arrived back in San Diego on July 27th. We are all very appreciative of the fine care given Gordon on his journeying. His first visit to those foreign scenes was over 40 years ago, in 1947, not long after WW II. What memories that brings him of the theosophical lectures he gave then!

John Cooper Visits Point Loma

Days of mid-September were given to a visit from John Cooper of Sydney, Australia, renewing close ties of friendship when last in our home and offices six years ago. At the nearby Nazarene College (on the former Theosophical Headquarters grounds) a meeting was held at which historian Dr. Dwayne Little of the college presented historical slides picturing early Point Loma scenes of 1987 and the beginnings of theosophical activities through the ongoing years. After this, on invitation, Mr. Cooper spoke of his years as a lecturer at the University of Sydney, where he conducted courses for the Department of Religious Studies and for the Indian Studies Department, as well as teaching in the Continuing Education Program of the University. A lively discussion followed.

After leaving San Diego, John returned for several days to the Los Angeles area to discuss matters of mutual theosophical interest with many friends there belonging to various theosophical organizations. On October 8 he lectured, under the auspices of the Los

Angeles Center for Theosophic Studies, on "The Story of the Mahatma Letters"; but before that came the courses given at the Krotona School of Theosophy at Ojai. His busy schedule continued, taking him to cities in Canada and to the headquarters of the American Section TS in Wheaton.

And two days after John left P.L. came a surprise visit from other Australians, David and Cecily Dynes. Mrs. Dynes is Librarian for the Sydney T.S.

Fall Program at Krotona Institute, School of Theosophy

Of special interest in these courses are the two given by John Cooper, of Sydney, Australia, on "Key Ideas In Indian Thought", with main emphasis on the Yoga School of Patanjali, the Madyamika School of Nagarjuna, and the Advaita Vedanta of Sankara; and "From Buddha to Tantrayana: The Story of Indian Buddhism". "The story of the rise and fall of Buddhism in India," says Mr. Cooper, "is one of the great sagas in the history of ideas."

Other courses are "The Myths of our Lives" by Joy Mills; a "Study Circle: Life's Deeper Aspects," conducted by Nancy Elsinger, focusing on the book of the same title by N.Sri Ram; "Meditation: Techniques and Practices", conducted by Felix Layton and Joy Mills; and in continuing "Studies in The Secret Doctrine," Joy Mills will give special attention to Part II of Volume I on "The Evolution of Symbolism."

Lectures by Vonda Urban (Point Loma/Chicago Study Group)

Quarterly lectures by Vonda Urban to the Akbar Lodge, Chicago, (Adyar TS), which began more than a decade ago, continue with unabated interest. Recent subjects presented are on the Paramitas or Six Glorious Virtues, with special reference to pages in G. de P.'s *The Esoteric Path: its Nature and its Tests*. (Vol.I of that 12-vol. series). This is to be followed at the December solstice time with a study of *The Voice of the Silence*. And that subject will take several lectures!

Theosophical History

In its April 1989 (Vol.3, No.2) issue, the editor Leslie Price writes under "Investing in History": "...negotia-

tions are in progress about the long term frame work for TH in relation to the TS and the outside world..."

And he continues: "...there certainly appears to be a rising tide of interest in the life and work of the men and women who made Theosophy, and the hospitality offered each summer by the headquarters of the English Section to The History Conference is accepted by a wide range of students difficult to parallel elsewhere..."

...It is not always possible to do historical research... Many of the records of early Modern Theosophy are vulnerable to time and trauma... With every generation that passes it becomes more difficult to establish the truth about events in the past century. Theosophists, could end up like the Christians, with fragmentary documentation left from the earliest times, and a never ending launching of hypotheses to impart patterns to the conflicting and sparse data. An investment in theosophical history in our time may save for posterity clues to the truth which no amount of resources, a century hence, could recover. It is an interorganizational effort to save and know our common heritage."

Theosophical Digest

Vol. I, Nov. 3, July-September, 1989, continues the program initiated by the Theosophical Society in the Philippines to issue quarterly a magazine in size and format similar to the American Reader's Digest, but devoted to a simple statement of Theosophy, with new articles and also earlier ones drawn from various theosophical journals. It is a daring concept and plan for which all theosophists can only hope for sound success. The last 30 or so pages, titled Book Section, is given to condensations of books. In this issue it is "Finding Deep Joy" by Robert Elwood. Other regular features are "Wisdom Overheard", "Thoughts and Quotes", and "Worldwatch".

Informationsblatt über Theosophie in Deutschland

The current September-December 1989 issue of this booklet is No. 14. Its 40 pages list all theosophical organizations, their directors (or contact persons), meeting places, and addresses. To carefully note its contents brings surprise as to the actual number of centers in Germany, and also marks the sound service rendered by the Information-collector-editor, Helga

Rex (Grüneburgweg 106, 6000 Frankfurt am Main 1, W. Germany.)

From Hannover, Germany

Verlag Esoterische Philosophie GmbH (Hannover) of the T.S.-Point Loma-Covina, has just completed publication of the series of volumes of translations composing G. de Purucker's *The Esoteric Tradition*. This last volume, in a beautifully bound hardcover, titled "Mysterien Schulen und Lehren", contains chapters on the important subjects: Great Sages and Their Place in the Cosmic Hierarchy; Pneumatology and Psychology: Mysteries of Man's Inner Nature—I; another chapter of the same title; Great Seers Versus Visionaries; The Esoteric Schools; and finally, postscript: Some Misunderstood Teachings of the Mysteries. —A great book for students reading German. For further information write: Esoterische Philosophie e.v. Culemeyertrift 5, 3000 Hannover 21, W. Germany.

"Masterpieces of Fantasy and Enchantment"

A friend has sent us this anthology, and we are grateful. Among the 34 authors included in it Point Loma students of olden days will recognize Kenneth Morris, Welsh and Point Loma Theosophist, represented with three of his tales: "The Sapphire Necklace," "The Regent of the North," "The Eyeless Dragon", all originally published in *The Theosophical Path* many years ago (and "The Eyeless Dragon" also in our *Eclectic*, No.59, July-Aug. 1980). In these enchanting stories the reader is transported first to the land of the Druids, then to the world of the Valkyrie, and in the last to the Yellow Dragonland of China.

The volume, compiled by David G. Hartwell for the Doubleday Book Clubs, appeared in a Book Club edition in Spring 1988, and in the fall of that year in a trade edition. Under section headings: "Enchantments", "Wonders", "Creatures", "Worlds", and "Adventures", the reader will recognize many well known names: Charles Dickens, Ursula K. Le Guin, Horace Walpole, Mark Twain, Ray Bradbury, Saki, L. Frank Baum, Lord Dunsany. Kenneth Morris would be pleased at the company.

Death of Rex Dutta

On August 1, 1989, Rex Dutta died at Tekels Park, Camberly, England. He was a longtime Theosophist, and editor of *Viewpoint Aquarius*, as well as Chairman of

The Mahatma Trust. In its eighteen years of production *Viewpoint Aquarius* regularly carried a section on Theosophy.

Typographical Error

"1933", line 4 in small print in the July/August *Eclectic* No. 112, should of course have read "1988" — 100 years since the publishing of *The Secret Doctrine*.

Oh, Those Initials: An Explanation

Dr. J.H. Dubbink, well known Theosophist of the Adyar Society in Holland, has asked us to make clear that the initials JHD in the Introductory Note preceding the General Index in all 12 volumes of *Esoteric Teachings* of G. de Purucker, are not his. We regret any embarrassment this may have caused the professor — but initials are initials. And these refer to John H. Draais, who cheerfully accepts responsibility for them. (See p.v. of Compiler's Preface to those volumes.)

An Introduction to Sanskrit: by Thomas Egenes, Ph.D.

An 18-week university course. At the end of the course the student will be able to read and write Sanskrit and understand actually the Bhagavad-Gita in the Sanskrit devanagari letters.— (See note on our last page.)

FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE T.S. IN THE PHILIPPINES

The following letter, dated May 11, 1989, was received at our office iÂlate September. In an accompanying note, dated Sept. 16, Mr. Vic Hao Chin, Jr. wrote: "I just received the latest issue of *The Eclectic Theosophist* containing the replies of various theosophists. Now I understand why you thought my letter had nothing specific in it. This is because apparently you did not receive a later letter which I sent specifically in answer to the open letter. I am sending a photo copy of that letter just for your reference. —Ed.]

Dear Emmett:

Sorry for the delay in my reply to your open letter. Here are my thoughts on the matter:

1. The proposal to have an informal meeting of the different leaders of the Theosophical Movement is a laudable one. It has happened to some extent among the different heads of theosophical organizations in some countries, particularly in the United States. The growing trend towards networking is an evidence of the usefulness of these various contacts.

2. I personally find that establishing formal or informal linkages with the various branches of the Theosophical Movement is not difficult. This is particularly true when both the heart and mind of networking theosophists are open to each other; the heart-in the sense that there is sincerity to develop friendship; the mind-in the sense that we leave room for disagreements of opinions. We

constantly do this with other groups or individuals such as Christian religious groups, so there is no reason why it should not be easy to do so with any theosophical group.

3. The main difficulty it seems in the effective establishment of such linkages lies in historic sentiments. Some theosophists unfortunately enlarge personality issues where they are better de-emphasized. Perhaps I am one of those later generation theosophists who feel somewhat detached from these historic occurrences and hence can more easily relate with differing viewpoints.

To overlook personality issues does not necessarily mean that we will have to agree on our definition of what constitute theosophical teachings. We can disagree on this but still maintain warm fraternal working relationships with each other. Isn't this the very message of the theosophical movement-unity in diversity?

What matters if Mars and Mercury are in our system or not? We can maintain equal respect for those who think one way and those who think otherwise. But when the disagreement borders on personalities, either early or contemporary leaders, such sentiments easily frustrate efforts at genuine friendship and goodwill.

Such, I feel, is an important precondition for genuine networking among theosophists. Our hearts must be like the wings of a mother hen which can embrace all the small chicks who may be snapping at each other.

4. A formal union of the different societies is not practicable or desirable. Neither is it necessary at all. Organizations are structures that are sometimes hard to bend, and to do so might just create more divisiveness. We can all have fruitful partnerships in many projects without forcing any merger. Besides, we should recognize that each Society has its own special qualities that contribute to the over-all strength of the movement. The problem is not the separate structures, but the lingering mutual suspicion that may still throb in some of their members. It is this attitude that has to vanish—again a heart matter—and it is this that the proposed informal meetings will help achieve.

Within our modest capabilities and resources, we in the Philippines are prepared to support your effort or anyone else's effort to promote such deepening understanding among the leaders of the Movement. We are prepared to take part in common projects that can be done by different groups to promote our theosophical ideals.

With our warmest fraternal regards,

Faithfully,

Vic

Vicente Hao Chin, Jr.

President, T.S. in the Philippines

Note: Further letters received on the above general subject, will, in full or in part, if relevant, be considered for inclusion in our next issue. — Ed.

FROM LETTERS RECEIVED

Alexandra Alkun, München, W.Germany—It was a moving experience visiting and touching the ground of former Lomaland last year, where I could feel an uplifting, peaceful atmosphere, and I realized that Lomaland had been a strong spiritual center. It was wonderful we met, the only pity being that we had not enough time at our disposal and everything had to be done in such a hurry. I would have loved to stay longer in your library to look at all the pictures and documents of Lomaland.

The German Summerschool in St. Martin (July 20-27) of the T.S. Adyar was a wonderful event. About 83 members and friends not only from Germany, but also from Austria, Switzerland, France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Italy, Sweden, Norway and Denmark, gathered in a peaceful and cheerful atmosphere. A variety of profound and excellent lectures were held on the theme: Messages of Our Time. I was glad to give a report on the International Conference, the

SD weekend last year in Pasadena, by the T.S. Pasadena, and a few impressions of Point Loma. I personally hope for the future that many members of all the Societies will take part in the Summer- Schools of all the other different Societies so that mutual participation will be agreed upon and indeed taken for granted.

John Cooper, Sydney, Australia.—Re The Judge Case: Wayne Kell in *The Eclectic Theosophist*, May/June 1989, p.4, makes the valid point that the Judge Case commenced, as an issue well before the death of H.P.B. However, he makes two errors and an omission in his article. First, the correct paging for the articles in *The Theosophist* should be "*Theosophist* June 1889, p.515 and p.565", and not as he shows it under his Item 1. Secondly, the very important Judge article "Centers of the Theosophical Movement" which Olcott published in part was reprinted in full in *The Theosophical Forum*, July 1950.

Margaret Duncan-Miller, Surrey, England.—Your new publication *Book of the Living* is a most inspiring book. I like the author's style of writing, and I think the references to the Bible will be most helpful to people brought up with it.

And quotes from Letters about the recent visit of L.Gordon Plummer to Germany and Holland:

Renate Schmidt, Berlin, W.Germany: We've heard that G.P. is safely back home. It was a most enlightening and fruitful summer school, and I am full of gratitude.

Elsmarie Schoppe, Paderborn, W.Germany: With G.P.'s (Gordon Plummer's) presence during Convention and Summer-school this year we had an unforgettable event. By sharing our studies and giving the high spiritual teachings of the Old Wisdom we all were deeply touched. Maybe it was not easy for some to follow through the Universe to the Sun and back to the Atom, but nevertheless everybody was richly presented with the teachings he understood. We listened with thankful hearts, knowing well that this was our opportunity to get a deeper understanding of the Archaic Wisdom. So we were much impressed from the first afternoon when he spoke about Point Loma, to the last evening when he gave his "white magic". By his wonderful leading through the week, the summer- solstice and the admission of six new members became a very special event this year. But nothing would have been functional without Renate Behrenbeck's organizing during the months before and the week itself, and also without Irmgard Scheitauer's translations, and last but not least without the special care of G.P. by Erika and Wilfried Goltz.

Ursula and Georg Schwarm, Nürnberg, W. Germany:—We had a very good time with Gordon and we hope he will remember these days in the same good way we do. In addition to his splendid lectures he gave us examples of his perfect magic tricks!

Wilfried Goltz, Berlin, W.Germany:—Gordon did a wonderful job in Brin-ghausen. When he started his third lecture all copies of his books (in German) were sold out. All in all it was the best Convention since Elsie (Benjamin) stayed with us in Budingen.

Irmgard Scheitauer, Berlin, W.Germany:—I think, after Gordon's visit, that all have seen that Theosophy means somewhat more than the words 'Karma', 'Reincarnation', etc. We went out to the 'solar System'—whether all were able to follow or understand.

Jan v.d.Sluis, Rotterdam, Holland:—I hope that Gordon arrived safely and in good health in San Diego. It has been a wonderful experience enjoying his presence. He brought with him "the Point Loma Spirit".

Willy Schmit, The Hague, Holland:—It has been more than a week since Gordon left for Toronto....His visit to Europe has been a great success. He gave three lectures at the Blavatskyhouse,, where he was cordially received, two with

slides and the geometrical figures, entitled "In the Nature of Things", and one about "the Seven Jewels of Wisdom." The audience was deeply impressed by the way he presented the teachings, reaching the deeper levels of understanding.

He also gave lectures for the School (School for the Study of the Esoteric Philosophy), with the same success.

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About the Author

Dr. Egenes has taught introductory Sanskrit to more than 500 students in graduate and undergraduate programs, continuing education classes, and high school classrooms. He created and developed this systematic method during nine years of intensive Sanskrit teaching. He is currently writing the second volume of *Introduction to Sanskrit*, which will include the remaining grammar rules traditionally covered during first-year college classes.

Perfect binding, 378 pp, \$18.50. Publication date, Sept. 1989. Order now from: Point Loma Publications., P.O.Box 6507, San Diego, Ca. 92106

CONTRIBUTIONS

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